

REMARKS

Claims 11, 13-19 remain pending in the present application. Claim 12 was cancelled pursuant to Applicants' Preliminary Amendment filed on January 20, 2004.

Priority

At page 2 of the Office Action issued November 10, 2004, the Examiner has required an amendment to provide an indication of the priority of the present application. The Examiner's attention is directed to the originally filed Application Data Sheet in the present application, which identifies the parent application and the status of the present application as a divisional thereof.

Applicants submit herewith a revised Application Data Sheet, which indicates the patent number of the parent application, as well as the claim to priority to U.S. Provisional Application no. 60/223,040, filed August 4, 2000, to which the parent application also claims priority. Pursuant to item 18 of the PTO/SB/05, this divisional application incorporates by reference the entirety of the parent application, and as such the claim of priority to the first-filed provisional application cited above.

Information Disclosure Statement

Applicants thank the Examiner for pointing out that duplicates of the Information Disclosure Statements that had been filed in the parent application were not filed in this application. Submitted herewith is a proper Information Disclosure Statement under 37 CFR §§ 1.97 and 1.98, with copies of forms PTO/SB/08A which were filed in the parent application, also including a new PTO/SB/08A which includes the references cited by the Examiner on a PTO-892 in the parent application.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over Bentley et al.

Claims 11, 13, and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by Bentley et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,565,344). Applicants traverse this basis for rejection and respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal thereof.

Bentley et al., filed on March 9, 2001, is unavailable as a reference as to the present application, in view of the earlier filing date of U.S. Provisional Application no. 60/223,040, filed August 4, 2000, to which the present application claims priority through its parent application, discussed above.

Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Terakawa

Claims 16-17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by Terakawa (U.S. Patent No. 5,601,851). Applicants traverse this basis for rejection and respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal thereof.

Claim 16 is directed to an extrusion die for meltblowing molten polymers comprising at least two separate polymer supply ports entering from an entrance portion of the die, said polymer supply ports communicating with separate extrusion capillaries having exit openings at an exit portion of the die, said separate extrusion capillaries cooperating as a combined orifice, at least one gas supply port entering from the entrance portion of the die, said gas supply port communicating with *at least one gas jet extending through the die and arranged concentrically around the exit openings* of said combined orifice, wherein said extrusion capillary exit openings and said gas jet communicate with a blowing orifice in the exit portion of the die (emphasis added).

Terakawa discloses a meltblowing spinneret device for producing combined filaments (Abstract). The spinneret of Terakawa is distinctly a linear beam apparatus, as evident from the illustration of nozzle plate 5 in Figs. 5 and 6, described at col. 6, line 56, bridging to col. 7. Terakawa fails to disclose or suggest gas jets arranged concentrically around the exit openings, as claimed herein.

At page 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner directs attention to Terakawa at col. 8, lines 28-38, wherein Terakawa, apparently referring to Fig. 1, discloses that

gas-spouting clearance 16 is formed between a clearance-defining plate 6 provided *around the nozzle plate 5*, and the nozzle plate 5. (Emphasis added).

The Examiner argues that this passage of Terakawa discloses gas jets “arranged concentrically around the exit openings”, utilizing the language from Applicants’ claim 16, rather than that of Terakawa, in order to address that limitation of claim 16.

Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner’s position is in error, as it is clear from Terakawa’s Figs. 5 and 6 that nozzle plate 5 is linear, and as such the gas jets 16 (Fig. 1) cannot be arranged “concentrically” around a linear plate. The portion

of Terakawa cited by the Examiner is clearly an awkward English translation of the original Japanese, and the use of the term "around" is a semantic error in translation. A thorough consideration of Terakawa reveals no suggestion of an apparatus meeting the limitations of claim 16.

Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Bentley et al.
in view of Allen

Claim 15 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Bentley et al. in view of Allen (U.S. Patent No. 6,491,507). Applicants traverse this basis for rejection and respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal thereof.

Neither Bentley et al. nor Allen (filed October 31, 2000) is available as prior art to the present application, in view of the claim to priority of U.S. Provisional Application no. 60/223,040, filed August 4, 2000.

Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Terakawa
in view of Gressett, Jr. et al.

Claims 18 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Terakawa in view of Gressett, Jr. et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,619,566). Applicants traverse this basis for rejection and respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal thereof.

Applicants reiterate their arguments in distinction over Terakawa, as set forth above.

Gressett, Jr. et al., filed March 22, 2001, is unavailable as prior art to the present application, in view of the claim to priority of U.S. Provisional Application no. 60/223,040, filed August 4, 2000.

Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

**Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Terakawa
in view of Gressett, Jr. et al. and Allen**

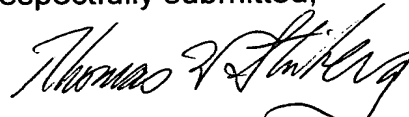
Claims 19 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Terakawa in view of Gressett, Jr. et al. and Allen. Applicants traverse this basis for rejection and respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal thereof.

Applicants reiterate their arguments in distinction over Terakawa, as set forth above. Also as set forth above, neither of Allen nor Gressett, Jr. et al. is available as prior art to the present application, in view of the claim to priority of U.S. Provisional Application no. 60/223,040, filed August 4, 2000.

Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

In view of the foregoing, allowance of the above-referenced application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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TWS:fgl

Enclosures:

IDS
Revised ADS
Petition for Extension of Time